

In the Office Action, claims 6, 10, 11 and 13 are objected to because claim 6 should be dependent on claim 2 as originally filed, and on line 1 of each of claims 10, 11 and 13 as it appears that "the end" should be --an end-. Accordingly, claims 6, 10, 11 and 13 have been amended. Such amendments are merely to clarify the claims and should not be deemed to affect the scope of the claimed invention.

Independent claims 2, 8, 10, 12 and 15-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Holliday 5,863,220 (see Fig. 4), despite the fact that the US Patent Office had already specifically decided that claims 2, 8, 10 (copied verbatim from the U.S. patent issued to Burris, U.S. Patent No. 5,997,350 ('350), and subsequently amended on September 14, 2001, are patentable over U.S. Patent 5,863,220 issued to Holliday. On January 15, 2002, an interview between the Examiner and Applicant's representative was conducted to discuss a new interpretation as presented in the Office Action dated November 30, 2001. Also discussed were amended claim 2 and proposed new claims 21-25. Examiner Luebke is thanked for her courtesy during the interview. The conclusion of the interview is recited in the Interview Summary dated January 17, 2002.

With respect to claims 2, 6, 10-12 and 15-20, Holliday '220 reference does not teach each and every feature of the claimed invention as now claimed. In particular, Holliday '220 does not disclose, *inter alia*,:

... the first end of said compression ring having at least a portion of a first internal bore of a diameter commensurate with the first diameter of the outer wall of said open rear end portion of said cylindrical sleeve for allowing the first end of said compression ring to axially slidably engage the first end of said cylindrical body member, (emphasis added).

With respect to the “compression ring” having “at least a portion of a first internal bore”, the specification shows this feature in Fig. 17 (See “248”).

Also, referring to page 10, lines 13-15 of the present specification, the second configuration shown in Fig. 5 is:

achieved after the fastener member 28 is axially moved along the connector body 24 to a second location on the connector body 24 such the second inner bore 64 of the fastener member 28 engages the outer surface of the connector body 24.” (emphasis added).

Furthermore, the specification (as of the original filing date) is replete with references to the fastener member moving axially along the connector body and engage the outer surface of the connector body. In addition, the specification is also replete with references to sliding engagement which describes this action as to “slide fastener member” along the connector body. See, e.g., page 12, lines 13-14.

In contrast Holliday ‘220 describes an “important feature” of his invention resides in the splicing devices 18 which are supplied as a part of each end connector fitting 10 instead of requiring a separate crimping tool. See Col 4, lines 18-22. Each splicing device is in the form of a nut made up of a one-piece annular body having internally threaded, relatively thin-walled portion 50. See Col 4, lines 22-30. Holliday ‘220 also states the splicing devices 18 are of hexagonal configuration to facilitate engagement by a conventional wrench in applying the necessary torque or rotational force to the splicing devices. Col 4, lines 53-60. Clearly, Holliday ‘220 teaches away from the invention as now claimed. In particular, Holliday teaches away from a compression ring to axially slidably engage the first end of said cylindrical body member.

With respect to claims 21, 22, and 23 the prior art does not disclose, *inter alia*, a “compression ring having a first non-tapered internal bore,” (claim 21); a “compression ring have a first constant diameter internal bore” (Claim 22); nor does it disclose that a compression ring “is not attached to a threaded member” (Claim 23). Referring to Fig. 4 of the present invention, a first non-tapered or constant diameter internal bore 62 is clearly shown in the drawings. Also, the compression ring 28 is not shown as being attached to a threaded member. Accordingly, the written specification has been amended to reflect these features shown in the drawings in accordance with *Vas-cath Inc. v. Mahurkar*, 935 F.2d 1555, 19 USPQ2d 1111 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

Similarly, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 4 and 6 under 103(a), the rejection being made in view of Holliday ‘220 and Szegda (U.S. Pat. No. 5,470,257). Applicant notes that both Holliday ‘220 and Szegda ‘257 are cited as “References Cited” and considered by the USPTO in the Burris Patent, No. ‘350, from which the pending claims were copied.

Neither Holliday ‘220 nor Szegda ‘257, taken either alone or in combination, teaches nor suggests the invention as now claimed as more fully explained above. Thus applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Similarly, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 11 under 103(a), the rejection being made in view of Holliday ‘220 and Nepovim (U.S. Pat. No. 3,846,738). Neither Holliday ‘220 nor Nepovim disclose the invention as now claimed in claim 11. Thus applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Applicant respectfully thanks Examiner Luebke the courtesy of indicating the allowability of claims 13 and 14.

New claims 24-34 are allowable for the same reasons as 2, 8, 10-12 and 15-20 as discussed more fully above.

With regard to new claims 27-32 refer to Figs. 16-20.

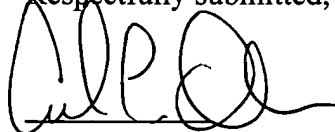
With regard to new claims 33-34, the specification discloses the connector body and post may be formed integrally as a single piece. Page 8, lines 33-35.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: 2-7-2002

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